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Broadcasters Letter

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Letter No. 2706

March 24, 1995

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS BEGIN AND END -- President Clinton's choice to head the Agriculture Department, Dan Glickman told the Senate Agriculture Committee, if confirmed, he would fulfill his mandate of being an advocate for agriculture. He said he will oppose major spending cuts which would disturb the economic stability of agriculture and that he intends to vigorously implement both GATT and NAFTA. Glickman said the EEP program should not be eliminated and that commodity programs should give farmers the freedom and flexibility to respond to market signals. Reorganizing USDA was another priority Glickman discussed before the Agriculture Committee. When asked about the Administration's farm bill recommendations, Glickman said he would reveal them "in a timely fashion" if confirmed. Glickman also offered his views on rural development, saying it's a high priority for President Clinton and himself. On the conservation programs up for debate during the farm bill discussions, Glickman said he intends to make sure a rule of reason and fair play is implemented. He says he is also supportive of the anti-fraud food stamp proposals recently laid out by the Department, while recognizing the importance these programs play in meeting the nutrition requirements of American citizens. In summary, Glickman says his focus will be "advocacy agriculture" if he is confirmed as the next Secretary.

"FRESH" OR "FROZEN" -- To ensure consideration of all issues and scientific concerns, the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced (March 17) an extension of the public comment period on a proposed rule to prohibit the use of the term "fresh" to describe poultry that has been previously frozen. FSIS is soliciting public comments on options for reconciling one element of its "fresh" proposal with existing regulations for labeling poultry as "frozen." Under the proposal, poultry would be labeled "previously frozen" if its internal temperature has ever been below 26 degrees Fahrenheit. The extension of the comment period will also allow time for public comment on a recently completed Agricultural Research Service evaluation of raw poultry products that have been held at temperatures between 0 and 40 Fahrenheit. **Contact: Jacque Knight (202) 720-9113.**

FIRST GRANT TO EZ/EC -- USDA has given out the first award under the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community (EZ/EC) program. The grant is a \$75,000 award to Lock Haven, PA, one of President Clinton's EZ/EC designated areas. The award was made to the Central Intermediate Unit in West Decatur, PA., to establish a technology center in downtown Lock Haven. The center will provide technology training to local businesses, industries and individuals. It will also assist local companies and educational institutions to work together to meet changing workplace technology needs. The Rural Business Enterprise Grant of \$75,000 will be used to purchase computers and will leverage \$154,900 in operating funds from local government and business partners in the Lock Haven area. **Steve Hart (202) 720-6903.**

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SALUTED -- Agriculture's role in natural resources conservation was praised in a speech to the leadership of one of the nation's largest environmental organizations, the National Wildlife Federation. Acting Agriculture Secretary Richard Rominger said farmers are committed to environmental stewardship because of their stake in healthy water, soils, and air. In light of the upcoming debate on the 1995 farm bill, Rominger outlined the important contributions USDA's conservation programs have made to the health of the nation's natural landscape through the Conservation Compliance Program, the wetland/swampbuster provisions of the 1985 farm bill and the Conservation Reserve Program. He said research was necessary to help farmers produce efficiently and economically, while sustaining the natural resource base. **Contact: Nina Tracy (202) 720-7033.**

TAKING A QUICK LOOK AT SNOWFLAKES -- Sneaking a peek at snowflakes before they melt could help forecasters make accurate predictions about water supplies from expected mountain snow melt. But how to keep a snowflake from melting before images of the flake's crystals can be captured? USDA scientists have solved the problem by deep freezing the flakes at minus 320 degrees Fahrenheit, adding a thin metal coating and then zapping it with an electron beam inside a scanning electron microscope. The close-ups of the snowflakes offer new data on the size, shape and melting properties of snow crystals, allowing computer forecasts of expected water supplies. In addition to determining the amount of water in snowpacks based on the size and shape of the crystals, it also enables scientists to identify pollutants in the crystals. **Contact: Maria Bynum (202)720-5192.**

HAM RECALLED FROM 15 STATES -- A Dubuque, Iowa food processing firm is recalling almost 9,000 hams because some may contain small pieces of glass. FDL Foods, Inc. is recalling all 3-pound cans of its "Dubuque Royal Buffet Ham, Water Added" with the code 2234D or 2234N embossed on the label side of the can. The product was mainly distributed to retail food stores in Arizona, Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin, but small amounts of the product may have been distributed in other states. If consumers have purchased a canned ham they think may be affected, they can call FDL Foods at their toll-free consumer inquiry number: 1-800-922-3122. **Contact: USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline (800)535-4555.**

AN EEP PACKAGE FOR POULTRY -- USDA officials have put together a multi-country package of initiatives to encourage sales of U.S. poultry. Under Secretary of Agriculture for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services Eugene Moos announced (March 17) the initiatives under USDA's Export Enhancement Program to encourage sales of 20,500 metric tons of U.S. frozen poultry. Sales of frozen poultry will be made to buyers through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices in all countries. That means total sales to all destinations may not exceed 20,500 metric tons. The export sales will be facilitated with cash bonus payments to enable U.S. exporters to compete at prevailing prices in these markets. These allocations will be valid until June 30, 1995. **Contact: Priscilla B. Glynn (202) 720-3329.**

EEP FOR RICE -- Increasing sales of U.S. rice is the intent of an Export Enhancement Program (EEP) package offered by the Department of Agriculture. Under Secretary of Agriculture for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services Eugene Moos announced (March 17) a 220,000 metric ton, multi-regional package of initiatives under EEP to boost sales of U.S. rice during the 1995 marketing year. Sales of rice will be made to buyers in all countries announced through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. Cash bonus payments to U.S. exporters should help sales at competitive prevailing prices in these markets. The allocations will be valid until June 30, 1995. **Contact: Priscilla B. Glynn (202) 720-3329.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1973 -- Get ready for tornado season! In this edition of Agriculture USA, Lori Spiczka talks with weather experts on the origins of the tornado, what to do if one strikes and how new weather equipment will help notify people sooner of an impending tornado. (Weekly cassette -- 13-1/2 minute documentary). ****Note to broadcasters: Beginning with programs aired the week of April 17, Agriculture USA will switch to a shorter, five minute format.**

CONSUMER TIME # 1452 -- Get connected: a look at a computer education program. Instant bloom! Early spring lawn care. It's bunny time again! Easter egg safety. (Weekly cassette -- consumer features).

AGRITAPE FEATURES # 1964 -- City dwellers receiving farm payments. Spring is in the air. Study shows that conservation tillage pays. '95 wheat and feed grain loan rate. (Weekly cassette -- news features).

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWS LINE -- Monday, April 3, world horticultural trade and U.S. exports. Tuesday, April 4, weekly weather and crops. Thursday, April 6, dairy products. Monday, April 10, world supply and demand for cotton. Tuesday, April 11, world ag supply and demand; cotton and wool outlook; crop production; world cotton; weekly weather and crops. Wednesday, April 12, world ag production; world grains trade; world oilseeds trade. Thursday, April 13, hog outlook. Friday, April 14, milk production. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our NEWS LINE carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

USDA RADIO NEWS LINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5 p.m., ET, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

ACTUALITIES -- Dan Glickman, Agriculture Secretary Designate, appears before Senate Agriculture Committee in confirmation hearings. USDA Chief Meteorologist Norton Strommen updates crop and weather conditions nationwide.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on Easter egg safety. Patrick O'Leary reports on fighting whiteflies with fungus. Eric Parsons reports on 1995 wheat and feed grain loan rates.

SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS:

Thursday, 3:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET, Telstar 302, Channel 6 (Transponder 3H), (C-band), audio 6.2 and 6.8, downlink frequency 3820 MHZ. Monday, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET, Galaxy 4, Channel 12 (C-band), audio 6.2 and 6.8, downlink frequency 3940 MHZ.

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services. Call Larry A. Quinn (202)720-6072 or write 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 202050-1300.

OFF MIKE

CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURIST...honored with the 1995 Distinguished Award was **Robert Mondavi** for his outstanding work in viticulture development in the Napa Valley. **Walt Shaw** (KHTK, Sacramento, CA) says the California Chapter of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers presented the award this week during their Agricultural Outlook Conference. Last year's recipient was former Secretary of Agriculture **Richard Lyng**.

EMUS...are big birds that are smaller than ostriches, but lay eggs longer. **Hal Hanna** (KXEL, Waterloo, IA) says this week's Hawkeye Farm Show in Cedar Falls, IA, had a booth on emus. About a dozen Iowa farmers are raising them primarily as a breeding project to increase availability of these birds. Emus are raised for meat, feathers and oil. Corn growers there are excited about a new product from corn that is an ethanol-based windshield washer solvent. Hal was broadcasting live from the show when activity in nearby booths overloaded electrical circuits temporarily interrupting his coverage. The joys of remote broadcasting!

DAIRY FUTURES...are drawing interest from Wisconsin farmers. **Bob Meyer** (Goetz Farm Radio Network, Marshfield, WI) reports that futures contracting began last year on nonfat dry milk and cheddar cheese through the Coffee, Sugar and Cocoa Exchange in New York. Only five months can be considered for futures contracting: February, May, July, September and November. Spring fever has arrived, Bob says, although they experienced a deep frost this year because of low snowfall. He broadcasts on 45 Wisconsin stations with a 5-6 a.m. live program and a variety of other agricultural features available via satellite throughout the day.

AGRICULTURE DAY...was celebrated in Minnesota where 150 farmers were fed breakfast before a drawing was held for a grand prize that provided all the seed, chemicals and fuel sufficient to plant 40 acres of corn and 40 acres of soybeans. Value was \$6,000, and the winner was **Clair Drescher**, a young hog farmer. **Al Carstens** (KATE, Albert Lea, MN) said farmers had to register several weeks ahead and 45 other prizes valued from \$100-\$300 were given. Al just became a grandpa for the second time--first grandson.


LARRY A. QUINN, Director

Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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